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### **Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources**

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#### **Time and Date**

11.00 am on Tuesday, 7 March, 2023

#### **Place**

Diamond Rooms 1 and 2 - Council House

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#### **Public Business**

1. **Apologies**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**
  - (a) To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 4 October, 2022 (Pages 3 - 6)
  - (b) Matters Arising
4. **Support for Pupils and Staff from Earlsdon Primary and Finham Park 2 Secondary Schools to attend the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Partner Schools 70th Anniversary International Peace Conference** (Pages 7 - 12)

Report of the Interim Chief Executive (Section 151 Officer)
5. **Any other items of public business which the Cabinet Member decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved.**

#### **Private Business**

Nil

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Julie Newman, Chief Legal Officer, Council House, Coventry

Monday, 27 February 2023

Note: The person to contact about the agenda and documents for this meeting is Suzanne Bennett Tel: 024 7697 2299

Membership: Councillor R Brown, Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources

By invitation Councillor T Sawdon, Shadow Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources

**Public Access**

Any member of the public who would like to attend the meeting in person is encouraged to contact the officer below in advance of the meeting regarding arrangements for public attendance. A guide to attending public meeting can be found here: <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/publicAttendanceMeetings>

**Suzanne Bennett****Tel: 024 7697 2299**

**Coventry City Council**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources**  
**held at 10.00 am on Tuesday, 4 October 2022**

- Present: Councillor R Brown (Cabinet Member)
- Members: Councillor T Sawdon (Shadow Cabinet Member)
- Other Members: Councillor N Akhtar, Chair, Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee  
Councillor D Welsh, Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities
- Employees:
- Finance P Helm, P Jennings
- Law and Governance S Bennett, O Aremu
- Others present: M Sutherland, Coventry City of Culture Trust

## **Public Business**

### **1. Declarations of Interest**

There were no disclosable interests.

### **2. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 September, 2021 were agreed and signed as a true record.

There were no matters arising.

### **3. Coventry City of Culture Trust - Temporary Loan Funding Support**

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources considered a report of the Chief Operating Officer which indicated that the Coventry UK City of Culture year concluded in May 2022. As planned, the programme has now entered a legacy phase that is intended to run until March 2024 under the direction of the Coventry City of Culture Trust (the Trust) which continues to operate albeit on a smaller scale than it did during the UK City of Culture year. The legacy phase is a vital element of the UK City of Culture concept, enabling the City to embed new cultural capacity and activity to maximise the value of Coventry hosting the UK City of Culture programme across its title year.

Funding and commercial income streams have been identified to support the legacy period and the Trust has approved a budget position aimed at managing the extent of its activities within the financial envelope of the resources identified. However, the challenge of hosting the UK City of Culture year during a period blighted by the COVID-19 pandemic followed by challenging trading conditions in

summer 2022 has put additional financial stress on the financial model and cashflow forecasts of the Trust. The Trust's most recent financial monitoring activity has indicated a worse than previously anticipated financial position. As a result, the Trust has found itself in the position of having over-committed its core activity programme by c5%. In addition, the Trust is awaiting payment of confirmed capital grant funding and several payments due from HMRC relating to Theatre Tax Relief and VAT. The Trust has therefore identified a need for some temporary cashflow support which will enable it to realign expenditure plans with the timing of grant support and other income flows over the coming period.

The report set out the background to this request and detailed the financial arrangements proposed. The Trust is seeking a cash-flow facility of up to £1m from the City Council to meet the short-term financing shortfall that it faces, repayable over the remaining course of the Trust's project period. The loan will be provided at a commercial rate of interest that will provide the Council with a financial return to reflect the risk incurred in an arrangement of this nature. The intention will be for this to be repaid over a short term period and before the end of the Trust's operating period in March 2024. This will minimise the amount of interest payable by the Trust but is consistent with it being able to maintain a robust cash-flow position. It is proposed that the final details of these arrangements and the ability to vary these to reflect any change in circumstances be delegated to officers, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources and the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities. The rate of interest will exceed the rate at which the Council would need to pay to secure the equivalent external funding (for instance from the Public Works Loans Board) although in reality the Council will source the temporary financing from its existing cash balances as an alternative to investing these balances through its routine treasury management activity. Overall, the Council will generate an annual return as a result of the margin applied on top of the rate of borrowing. The loan will be managed by the Treasury Team in line with the Commercial Investments Strategy.

The Council has undertaken due diligence in the Trust's financial position. The report detailed potential risks and indicated that the Trust has previously demonstrated its ability to manage within a tight financial budget and has a robust governance structure.

The Council has already provided or committed funding to date to directly support the Trust (for delivery and legacy) within an overall package of £5.25m. This does not include the City Readiness funding or Cultural Capital Programme package which have facilitated hosting the overall programme of events and wider investment into cultural and heritage assets, but which was not paid directly to the Trust.

In accordance with the Constitution, Councillor N Akhtar, Chair of the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee attended the meeting for this item of business and agreed the need for urgency, such that call in arrangements do not apply. The reason for urgency is that the loan is required to provide immediate cashflow support to the City of Culture Trust. If the decision was delayed, this would be a threat to the Trust being able to remain in a positive cashflow position.

**RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources:-**

- 1) Approves a loan of up to a sum of £1m to Coventry City of Culture Trust (the Trust) on commercial terms as detailed in the report.**
- 2) Delegates authority to the Chief Operating Officer (S151 Officer) and the Director of Law and Governance, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources and the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, to finalise and agree the detailed terms of the transaction with the Trust. The authority under this delegation shall also include the power to undertake all necessary due diligence and the entry into of the necessary legal agreements and subsequently the power to negotiate and agree any such variations as is deemed necessary to the terms of the loan facility.**

**4. Any Other Items of Urgent Public Business**

There were no other items of urgent public business.

(Meeting closed at 10.20am)

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Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources

7 March 2023

**Name of Cabinet Member:**

Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources – Councillor R Brown

**Director Approving Submission of the report:**

Interim Chief Executive (151 Officer)

**Ward(s) affected:**

N/A

**Title:**

Support for Pupils and Staff from Earlsdon Primary and Finham Park 2 Secondary Schools to attend the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Partner Schools 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary International Peace Conference

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**Is this a key decision?**

No - The proposals do not have a significant impact on communities in more than two electoral wards and do not reach the financial threshold for a key decision.

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**Executive Summary:**

The report recommends that the Policy Contingency budget provides funding of £10,000 to support 10 pupils (5 from Earlsdon Primary school and 5 from Finham Park 2 Secondary school) and supporting staff members to attend the UNESCO Partner Schools 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary International Peace Conference in Japan in September 2023.

**Recommendations:**

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources is recommended to approve funding of £10,000 from the 2022/23 Policy Contingency budget to support pupil and teacher attendance at the UNESCO Partner Schools 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary International Peace Conference to be held in Japan in September 2023.

**List of Appendices included:**

None.

**Background papers:**

None.

**Other useful documents**

None.

**Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?**

No

**Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?**

No

**Will this report go to Council?**

No



**Report title: Support for Pupils and Staff from Earlsdon Primary and Finham Park 2 Secondary schools to attend the UNESCO Partner Schools 70th Anniversary International Peace Conference**

**1. Context (or background)**

- 1.1 The origins of the UNESCO Associated Schools Network (ASPnet) go back to November 1953 when UNESCO launched a project called the Scheme of Co-ordinated Experimental Activities in Education for Living in a World Community, with the participation of 33 secondary schools in 16 Member States. ASPnet was rooted in the mission to promote education for international understanding, co-operation, and peace, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) as well as interlinked with the 1974 Recommendation (concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms) as a model in the field of international education.
- 1.2 Today, the project has developed into the largest network of UNESCO, connecting more than 12,000 educational institutions from all levels of education in 182 countries. ASPnet continues to drive innovation and transformative learning experiences towards Global Citizenship Education, Education for Sustainable Development and intercultural and heritage learning at schools worldwide.
- 1.3 To celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ASPnet in 2023, and to best illustrate its history as an incubator of promoting a culture of peace and sustainable development through education and taking into the consideration of the many challenges that we are facing today the theme for the ASPnet 70th anniversary event is proposed to be “Fostering a Culture of Peace and Sustainability through Transformative Education”.
- 1.4 The Deputy Headteacher at Earlsdon Primary School has demonstrated a strong commitment to peace education and sits on the Lord Mayor’s Committee for Peace and Reconciliation. She has also had many years of building Japanese education in Coventry and led on many local initiatives including a pupil Japan conference for over 25 schools; the Flame of Friendship (40 schools) which mirrored the torch relay in Japan before the Tokyo Olympic Games; the creation and installation of the Japanese Peace Garden in the War Memorial Park; and a visit to Japan for primary school pupils from five Coventry schools in 2019.
- 1.5 Earlsdon Primary School is one of the leading schools in the city for peace initiatives. It was the first school in the city to be awarded the Lord Mayor’s Peace Award and it has national School of Sanctuary Status. Additionally, the school has recently been awarded the full British Council International School Award for work to link pupils around the world.
- 1.6 The Director of UNESCO partner schools in the UK has approached the Deputy Headteacher of Earlsdon Primary school (who has worked with UNESCO on school programmes since 2018) to invite five pupils from Earlsdon Primary School to represent UK schools at the Peace Conference in Japan. Through discussion, it is also proposed to take five additional pupils from Finham Park 2 Secondary School to enable a representation from both the primary and secondary phases. Finham Park 2 work closely with Earlsdon Primary School on a number of international projects.
- 1.7 We continue to build strong links with UNESCO, who are currently considering an application from Coventry for all our schools to join ASPnet.

- 1.8 Between now and the conference the deputy headteacher will be working on options that can increase wider school participation in the event. This includes an offer from Oxford University to lead ceramics workshops for up to 600 pupils, provide opportunities for pupils and families to visit their kilns situated in Oxford University's 1,000 acre ecological research estate and offer free bespoke packages for participating Coventry schools to take part in workshops at Oxford colleges.

## **2. Options considered and recommended proposal**

- 2.1 The recommended option is for the Council to identify funding to support the visit of 10 pupils and supporting staff to the UNESCO Partner Schools 70th Anniversary International Peace Conference. This is a unique opportunity for pupils from Coventry to represent the UK at the conference,
- 2.2 The money would contribute to the cost of travel, subsistence, and participation in educational activities whilst in Japan.
- 2.3 The alternative option is for the Council not to provide the funding, but this would be a lost opportunity for the City and the pupils involved.

## **3. Results of consultation undertaken**

- 3.1 No consultation has been undertaken due to the relatively limited scope of the proposals within the report.

## **4. Timetable for implementing this decision**

- 4.1 An initial £15,000 must be raised by March 2023 to enable flights to be purchased to secure places at the conference.

## **5. Comments from Interim Chief Executive (Section 151 Officer) and Chief Legal Officer**

### **5.1 Financial implications**

The Policy Contingency budget is £75,000 per annum. None of this has been committed or spent in 2022/23. The total cost of the project is estimated to be £25,000, of which the ask against the policy contingency budget is £10,000.

Finham Park 2 and Earlsdon Primary Schools have already been working together to raise funds to support the project, and a peace organisation in Nottingham have contributed £4,500.

Funding proposals will be submitted to other funding organisations, and 2 foundations that have been significant funders of previous projects have already been approached. The timing of an answer on these proposals is by the 31<sup>st</sup> May, but there is not a guarantee so other funders will be approached.

### **5.2 Legal implications**

This money would be given to the project through the general power of competence under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011.

## **Other implications**

None.

### **5.3 How will this contribute to the Council Plan ([www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/))?**

This proposal is in line with the stated aims of the Council Plan of raising the profile of Coventry, increasing access to arts, sports, and cultural activities, and improving educational outcomes.

Coventry is also renowned as an international centre for peace and reconciliation, and this closely aligns with being the selected city to represent the UK at a global peace conference for young people.

### **5.4 How is risk being managed?**

No key risks have been identified.

### **5.5 What is the impact on the organisation?**

There are no key impacts on the organisation.

### **5.6 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)**

Pupils from the two schools will be invited to apply for a place at the conference. They will be chosen based on their ability to represent the city of Coventry at an international event. They will have to demonstrate commitment to working with schools across the city.

To ensure that this opportunity is fully accessible, pupils will not have to fund their place at the conference, but they will be expected to contribute to fundraising. They will also be expected to disseminate the outcomes of the conference and help to lead on new peace initiatives on their return.

### **5.7 Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment**

No implications.

### **5.8 Implications for partner organisations?**

We work closely with all our schools in the city. The proposal is designed to support Education in the city and have wider benefits for pupils at a number of schools across the city.

**Report author(s):**

**Name and job title: Rachael Sugars, Head of Service - Education**

**Directorate: Education**

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Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

<b>Contributor/approver name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Date doc sent out</b>	<b>Date response received or approved</b>
<b>Contributors:</b>				
Suzanne Bennett	Governance Services Co-ordinator	Law and Governance	20/02/23	20/02/23
Cllr Kindy Sandhu	Cabinet Member – Education & Skills		20/02/23	20/02/23
Paul Jennings	Finance Manager	Finance	20/02/23	20/02/23
<b>Names of approvers for submission: (officers and members)</b>				
Legal: Sarah Harriott	Civil, Information and Governance Solicitor	Law and Governance	20/02/23	20/02/23
Director: Barry Hastie	Interim Chief Executive (Section 151 Officer)	Finance	21/02/23	24/02/23
Members: Councillor Richard Brown	Cabinet Member Strategic Finance and Resources		21/02/23	24/02/23

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